

County of Loudoun
Department of Planning
MEMORANDUM



DATE: October 22, 2007

TO: Marchant Schneider, Project Manager
Land Use Review

FROM: Cynthia L. Keegan, AICP, Program Manager
Community Planning

SUBJECT: SPEX 2007-0021, Route 50 Medical Campus

BACKGROUND

Columbia LaGrange Hospital, Inc. is requesting a special exception (SPEX) to permit a general hospital, outpatient medical care facilities and an associated helistop on approximately 24 acres of a 98.56 acre parcel. The proposal is on a portion of a parcel that is subject to a rezoning application currently being processed through the County's legislative rezoning process. The rezoning application, ZMAP 2006-0007, Glascock Field at Stone Ridge, is requesting that the 98.56 acre parcel be rezoned from PD-GI Planned Development-General Industrial and CLI Commercial Light Industrial to PD-OP, Planned Development-Office Park and R-16 Residential. The subject of this application is on a portion of the property proposed to become PD-OP.

On October 17, 2006, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors approved an amendment to the Revised General Plan, CPAM 2005-0007, the Arcola Area/Route 50 Corridor Plan, changing the planned land use for the subject property from planned Industrial to planned Business uses.

The property is located on the northwest quadrant of John Mosby Highway(Route 50) and Gum Spring Road (Route 659). A review of County GIS records and submission materials indicates minor floodplain, wetlands, and tree cover are located on the subject site. The subject site is also located within the Ldn 60 airport noise contour.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The subject property is guided by the land use policies of the Revised General Plan and the Dulles South Area Management Plan (DSAMP). Being the newer of the two plans, the Revised General Plan supersedes the DSAMP when there is a policy conflict between the two (Revised General Plan, text, page 1-3). The property is located within the Dulles Community of the Suburban Policy Area, and is suitable for Business uses

(Revised General Plan, CPAM 2005-0007, 10/117/2006). The policies of the Loudoun County Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan (Bike/Ped Plan) and the Revised Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) also apply.

ANALYSIS

LAND USE

1. Location

The subject site is planned for a modified Business Community (*Arcola Area/Route 50 Corridor Plan, Policy 1, p. 1*). The County envisions a mix of uses in the modified Business area, however the predominant use is intended to be office and/or light industrial uses. All the uses will have a component of public/civic uses and parks and open space (*Arcola Area/Route 50 Corridor Plan, text, p. 4*). Proposed land uses are subject to the recommended land use mix ratios of the Revised General Plan (*Arcola Area/Route 50 Corridor Plan, Policy 1, p. 5*).

Countywide Health Care Facilities policies were adopted on March 8, 2005 by the Board of Supervisors, which are designed to guide the location and type of health care facilities and health care-related businesses throughout the County. One goal of the policies is the "development of a new hospital in the Dulles South area of the County which is experiencing rapid population growth and which presently has poor access to any hospital" (Revised General Plan, Policy 2, p. 2-24). In addition, the County recognizes that the residents of the Route 50 corridor do not have adequate access to emergency care or hospital-related services. The Route 50 corridor should be given special consideration for the next full-service hospital and EMS ambulance receiving facility to be built in the County (Revised General Plan, Policy 7, p. 2-24).

Health care facilities to be developed within the County shall take into consideration State regulations concerning the location of health care facilities and the following criteria (Revised General Plan, Policy 3, p. 2-24):

- The area, population, topography, highway facilities and availability of the services to be provided by the project in the particular part of the health service area in which the project is proposed, the distinct and unique geographic, socioeconomic, cultural, and transportation characteristics of the area to be served, and barriers to access to care;
- Compatibility of any proposed large-scale hospital facility with other uses in the vicinity, particularly the impact on existing, stable residential neighborhoods; and,
- Availability of sufficient acreage to permit the development and future expansion of the proposed health care facility and healthcare-related businesses on the site as well as the potential adverse impact such expansion would have upon existing or planned neighborhoods adjacent to the areas of potential expansion.

The Plan encourages the development of a hospital in the Dulles South area and, in particular, along the Route 50 corridor. It appears that the proposed site is an appropriate location for a hospital, as it is in a central location on Route 50, near the intersection of Route 659 relocated. However, the application does not include specific details regarding the geographic, socioeconomic, and other characteristics of the area to be served.

The Revised General Plan calls for a hospital in the Dulles South area, which currently has poor access to any hospital. The proposed hospital use, associated medical facilities and heliport are in general conformance with the land use policies of the Revised General Plan which identifies this area as appropriate for the development of hospital and business uses.

Staff recommends the application be amended to include information on geographic characteristics of the area to be served, including the area's population, highway facilities, and transportation. In addition, the application should ensure compatibility with and impact on surrounding uses, such as residential neighborhoods. The application should also ensure there is sufficient acreage for future expansion and what sort of impact this expansion would have in the vicinity of the project.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. River and Stream Corridor Resources

A portion of minor floodplain extends to the southeastern corner of this proposal. Neither the rezoning application nor this special exception application delineates the 50-foot management buffer adjacent to the floodplain boundaries as called for in the Revised General Plan (*Policy 2, p. 5-6*). Staff notes that the 50-foot management buffer can be reduced if it can be shown that a reduction does not adversely impact the other stream corridor resources, and that performance standards and criteria, developed as part of the implementation of the stream corridor policies, are met and maintained (Revised General Plan, *Policy 5, p. 5-6*).

Staff recommends the applicant delineate all stream corridor resources, including the 50-foot management buffer adjacent to the floodplain.

2. Wetlands

Protecting groundwater and surface water (e.g., streams and wetlands) from contamination and pollution is a major water resource issue for the County (Revised General Plan, *text, p. 5-12*). The County supports the federal goal of no net loss to wetlands in the County (Revised General Plan, *Policy 23, p. 5-11*).

Information regarding the location of wetlands has been submitted and wetlands have been delineated. Staff is concerned about the impacts to wetlands on site. Wetlands

are a vital part of certain plant and animal habitats, and they regulate flow for rivers and streams by filtering pollutants and fertilizers.

Staff recommends the wetlands on site be preserved to the greatest extent possible. If disturbance of some wetlands cannot be avoided, staff recommends they be mitigated on-site or within the impacted policy area.

3. Forest Cover

The Revised General Plan calls for the protection of forests and natural vegetation for the various economic and environmental benefits that they provide (Revised General Plan, Policy 1, p. 5-32).

The rezoning application provides Tree Save Areas on the overall Glascock site. No Tree Save Areas are proposed for the land bay that is the subject of this application.

Although no tree save areas are proposed on this application, staff recommends that the applicant look into potential areas on-site where natural vegetation could be saved to supplement and enhance the site's landscaping.

4. Historic & Archeological Resources

The Revised General Plan states that the County will require an archeological and historic resources survey as a part of all development applications (Revised General Plan, Policy 11, p. 5-36). A Phase I archeological investigation of the property was conducted in January 2006. Community Planning's referral for ZMAP 2006-2007 dated August 22, 2007 offered the following comments:

"At the time of the survey specific impacts to the floodplain areas were not determined and were therefore, investigated by pedestrian reconnaissance only. The Phase 1 Survey recommends testing the area of any anticipated floodplain impacts. As currently proposed the river and stream corridor resources will be impacted; however, staff recommends relocating development outside of these areas."

If development is not relocated to an area outside of the river and stream corridor resource, staff recommends the areas proposed to be impacted be surveyed.

5. Noise Associated with Ldn 60

For areas exposed to aircraft noise of greater than Ldn 65, the County prohibits the construction of new residential or other types of noise sensitive uses within those areas of Ldn 65 or greater (Revised General Plan, Policy 8, p. 5-46). According to the table on page 5-45 of the Plan, a hospital is considered to be a noise sensitive use (Revised General Plan, table, p. 5-45). For areas between the Ldn 60 – 65 aircraft noise contours the County will require acoustical treatment for all new dwelling units to ensure that interior noise levels within living spaces do not exceed a sound level of 45 db(A) (Revised General Plan, Policy 7b, p. 5-46). This proposal falls within the Ldn 60

contour. Acoustical treatment should be considered to ensure that interior noise levels of the hospital do not exceed a sound level of 45 db(A). Although Policy 7b, p. 5-46 states that acoustical treatment is needed for residential uses within the Ldn 60 – 65 noise contour, staff believes the intent of the policy was to protect all noise sensitive uses, both residential and otherwise. As stated previously, noise sensitive uses are listed in the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) table on p. 5-45 of the Plan. A hospital is one of the activities listed, and it is County's responsibility to protect noise sensitive uses from disturbance.

Staff recommends the use of acoustical treatment for the hospital to ensure that interior noise levels do not exceed a sound level of 45 db(A).

6. Noise Associated with Heliport

Loudoun County has many employment and activity centers that create various levels of noise and require consideration and, in some cases, abatement to meet public welfare and health objectives (Revised General Plan, Aural Environment text, p. 5-42).

A helistop is proposed with the application, which would likely have helicopter noise associated with it. The application should ensure that the helistop will not create disturbance for existing residences to the north of the subject site.

In addition, given that the heliport is proposed to be located underneath the flight path for Dulles Airport, staff encourages the applicant to demonstrate coordination with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Staff recommends that the application carefully consider the impact of noise generated from the helicopter traveling over nearby residences. Staff recommends the application ensure the helicopter associated with the helistop will not create a disturbance to residential uses adjacent to the subject site. In addition, staff encourages the applicant to demonstrate coordination with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

7. Highway Noise

Plan policies call for applications that propose land uses adjacent to existing and/or proposed arterial and major collector roads to design the site so that no residential or other noise-sensitive land use will incur traffic noise impacts (Revised General Plan, Policy 2, p. 5-46). To assess noise impacts, land development applications are required to use the latest version of the Federal Highway Administration's Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model (FHWA-RD-77-108, as amended) (Revised General Plan, Policy 2, p. 5-46). Route 50, an arterial road is located south of the property. No information has been provided regarding traffic noise levels.

Staff requests information pertaining to traffic noise levels be submitted to the Office of Transportation Services for review.

SITE DESIGN

Overall, the Plan calls for new development to achieve and sustain a built environment of high quality (Revised General Plan, Policy 1, pg. 5-5). The Arcola Area/Route 50 Corridor Plan, and the Revised General Plan, provide a number of design guidelines that are applicable to this project.

New development within the Arcola Area/Route 50 Corridor should conform to the design objectives of the Plan. In addition, on February 20, 2007 the Board of Supervisors approved the Route 50 Corridor Design Guidelines (dated January 4, 2007), which also apply to the subject site. The Route 50 corridor Design Guideline provide guidance in the Route 50 corridor for design standards related to building arrangement, streetscape, parking , service area, site element and building design.

The proposed rezoning application has been reviewed with respect to the design criteria outlined in the Route 50 Corridor Design Guidelines. According to the applicant the proffers will state that site design shall reflect these guidelines.

Staff supports the incorporation of the Route 50 Corridor Design Guidelines into the Proffer Statement. However, for the purpose of this special exception application, staff requires more detail as to the proposed building design, loading areas, lighting, signage, and usable outdoor spaces for this application along with commitments to ensure compliance with the Plan policies.

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

The County is committed to establishing an integrated trails system for pedestrians and cyclists that provides non-vehicular connections between residential neighborhoods, workplaces, shopping centers, parks, etc. (Revised General Plan, text, p. 5-39 and Bike/Ped Plan, text, p. 11). The County also supports the development of alternative forms of transportation in the Route 50 corridor such as transit and bicycle and pedestrian facilities (Arcola Area/Route 50 Corridor Plan, Policy 5, p. 4). Major collectors should be equipped with off-road shared use paths on both sides of the roadway that are at least 10-feet wide and paved (Bike/Ped Plan, Table 4-1, p. 29 and Text, p. 42). The Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan calls for a minimum 5-foot wide sidewalks to be on both sides of the street (Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan, Policy 2a, p. 31). The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan identifies the Gum Springs Road, and Route 50 as baseline connecting roadways. The baseline connecting roadways were selected to provide comprehensive connectivity throughout the County and will need to serve both bicycles and pedestrians (Bike/Ped Plan, Text, p. 45).

Staff recommends that an external and internal pedestrian and bicycle system be provided that includes safe and efficient connections to the various buildings and uses as well as surrounding areas. Shared use paths that are paved and 10-feet wide should be provided along Gum Springs Road, and Route 50. Intersection treatments should be provided at the Route 50/Gum Springs Road intersection to ensure bicycle and

pedestrian safety. Sidewalks that are provided internal to the development should be at least 5 feet wide. Green space/landscaped buffer areas should be provided between pedestrian and vehicular areas (e.g., roadways and parking lots). Crosswalks should be provided at all roadway and parking area intersections. These crosswalks would provide a visual and textural transition between non-vehicular and vehicular movements, such as a change in pavement type or, at minimum, pavement markings. Adequate bicycle parking should be provided at places of employment, within shopping centers and districts, etc. (*Bike/Ped Plan, Policy 1, p. 32 and CTP, Policy 10, p. 2-10*). The County encourages showers, clothing lockers, and changing rooms at places of employment (*Bike/Ped Plan, Policy 1d, p. 32 and CTP, Policy 10, p. 2-10*).

Staff recommends revising the SPEX plat to clearly depict bicycle and pedestrian access both to the site and internal to the site. Bicycle and pedestrian access should be provided along Route 50 and Gum Springs Road. Pedestrian pathways with plantings should be provided from the parking area to the buildings. Staff also recommends including a sufficient number of bicycle racks in support of non-vehicular modes of transportation to this project. Staff further recommends the applicant consider the provision of showers, clothing lockers, and changing rooms.

2. Light Trespass

The County promotes the use of lighting for convenience and safety without the nuisance associated with light pollution. In addition, the County promotes a glare-free environment through proper lighting performance standards to improve visibility and enhance public safety, in addition to developing appropriate lighting standards to prohibit unnecessary and intrusive light trespass that detracts from the beauty and view of the night sky (Revised General Plan, Policies 1a – 1d, p. 5-42).

The SPEX plat states that lighting and signage will be provided in accordance with Loudoun County regulations. No additional information has been submitted.

Staff recommends that lighting be fully shielded to reduce glare and light trespass. This includes lighting of the parking areas, and lighting related to signage along Route 50.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff finds that the proposed hospital use is an appropriate use for the site, as the Plan calls for a hospital in the Dulles South area. However, staff is unable to recommend approval until such time as the policies of the Revised General Plan are addressed. Staff recommends that application address the following:

- Provide additional information on geographic characteristics of the area to be served, including the area's population and highway facilities, and transportation;

- Ensure compatibility with and impact on surrounding uses, such as residential neighborhoods;
- Ensure there is sufficient acreage for future expansion and what sort of impact this expansion would have on neighborhoods in the vicinity of the project;
- Delineate all stream corridor resources, including the 50 foot management buffer adjacent to the floodplain;
- Preserve wetlands on site to the greatest extent possible;
- Use acoustical treatment to ensure that interior noise levels do not exceed a sound level of 45 db(A);
- Carefully consider the impact of noise generated from the helicopter traveling over nearby residences;
- Provide details on the proposed lighting, signage and landscaping with respect to the Route 50 Corridor Design Guidelines;
- Provide bicycle and pedestrian access both to the site and internal to the site; and,
- Ensure that lighting be fully shielded to reduce glare and light trespass, including lighting of the parking areas, and lighting related to signage along Route 50.

Staff is available to meet with the applicant to discuss issues raised above.

cc: Julie Pastor, AICP, Director, Planning